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little socks  
a good old-fashioned

Charles Montagu Esq  
with a sailor's kind  
regards

15 August 1856.

Nine years gift to  
Caroline Montagu  
from her dear Papa  
1857





Privately Printed

little soles  
a fine and charming

L2121



~~Starrs Montager~~  
~~with Starrs kind~~  
~~regards~~

15 August 1856.

Nine years gift to  
Caroline Montager  
from her dear Papa  
1857







Roman Jos. Fuly  
M. Hannak

# POSTHUMOUS RHYMES

BY JOHN HANNAH.

‘SHOULD AULD ACQUAINTANCE BE FORGOT?’

PRIVATELY PRINTED AT BECCLES, BY READ CRISP:

M.DCCC. LIV.

**LOAN STACK**

PR4739  
H45A17  
1854

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED  
TO THE MEMORY OF A MAN  
OF EQUAL INTELLIGENCE AND MODESTY,  
OF GENEROUS HEART AND STERLING UPRIGHTNESS;  
AND TO THOSE BY WHOM  
HIS CHARACTER WAS APPRECIATED,  
HIS FRIENDSHIP VALUED,  
AND HIS DEATH LAMENTED.





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## Introductory Memoir.

---

At Creetown — near the mouth of the river from which that town derives its name — in the county of Kirkcudbright, on the north shore of the inlet called Wigton bay, lived, many years ago, John Hannay, a builder in extensive business. His three sons were all brought up to his own trade. Two of them removed: one to a neighbouring town, the other to Glasgow and afterward to the West Indies. John, the eldest, remained at Creetown, where he saw the waning of the prosperity which had brightened his father's path. He married Janet, third daughter of John Brait, farmer of Chapelton; who died while his children were young, leaving the care of them and of the farm to his widow.

A whimsical preference to the duplication or reversibleness of the letters induced Mr. Hannay to change the form of his name to *Hannah*. He and his wife Janet had nine children. The eldest, JOHN HANNAH, — the subject of this sketch — was born at Creetown on

the 10th of November 1802. Much of his early youth was passed with his mother's relatives at Chapelton. That village is situated a mile from Creetown, between two small rivers, or 'burns,' which meet before they reach the bay, and are both excellent fishing streams. In one of them, called Minnipool, salmon and salmon-trout are caught. There is near Creetown, a high fall in the other river, which the salmon cannot leap; but it is better than Minnipool for its native burn trout. It is called, from certain cloth mills, near the falls, the Wauk-mill burn, and also, from places through which it runs, the Ballochanamar or Garrochar burn. For some distance these streams flow through large plantations. South of the Wauk-mill burn lies the way to Larg mountain, and hard by are

'the braces

'Of lang and bonny Cassencarrie.'

Other roads, skirting Minnipool or taking a similar direction, lead to Loch Grenoch — a favourite resort of the disciples of Isaak Walton — and to the lofty heights of Cairnsmuir.

The Brait family at Chapelton consisted, at the period to which we allude, of the widowed mother, her sons, who were engaged in the management of her farm, and several daughters remarkable for their personal attractions. The artlessness and industry which prevailed in

the habits of dame Brait's household is sketched at the beginning of the lines intituled 'The Bairnie's Pool.' \* The task of mending the potato basket — the 'prato creel' — worn by being dragged on the ground when filled by less sturdy gatherers, is assigned to 'Johnny,' the eldest son and the farmer; while the others ply 'ilk ane their task,' and the younger Johnny probably is looking to the condition of his fishing tackle, albeit not unobservant of the group.

Such were the scenes, and such the simple manners which gave their first impression to the warm heart of John Hannah. His father was a town resident and an artisan: the son was nurtured under the influences of rural life, and amidst employments in which natural objects were always prominent.

Among his father's friends was the now venerable captain J. M. Denniston, a retired officer, then an active sportsman as well as a gentleman of some literary taste. He had occasion for a lad to accompany him in his shooting and fishing expeditions; and Mr. Hannah offered the services of his son John. No employment could have been more congenial to the boy's disposition. Fearless and fond of adventure, he would ramble many miles over the wildest moors and mountains, sleeping

\* See page 33.

in some comfortless fishing hut with his gun for his companion and his guard. Frequently taking part in such excursions, he lived several years with captain Denniston. During this period his education was not entirely neglected. It was soon discovered that he had a mind of more than ordinary vigour; and although his studies were but irregularly pursued, his progress, both under private instruction and at the parish school, was rapid and satisfactory. His employer was so much pleased that he offered to give him a classical education; which his father declined on the common, but for the most part mistaken, ground that it would be useless.

Besides the presence and power of external nature in its most picturesque forms, there was another circumstance which tended to foster in John Hannah an inclination towards poetry. Captain Denniston had a sister who, not satisfied by an acquaintance with English and Scotch versifiers, determined to read the Italian poets in their own tongue. She had to acquire the language; but, bringing perseverance to the task, soon learned to render the most difficult passages of Dante and Tasso with correctness and fluency. While she read aloud the most striking lines, translating them, commenting on their merits, and inviting her brother to notice beauties he had overlooked, the eye of their young attendant brightened with interest, his ear bent with patient heed and eagerly drank in the enthusiasm of the poet.

Friends who would by no means have discouraged his love of reading and study, nevertheless deemed it right to check an imaginative bias. Even with a view to ordinary or commercial life his education was imperfect; and his prospects did not warrant a sacrifice of the plain and useful for the elegant and refined.

Not without regret on the part of his kind patron, young Hannah's school learning and his somewhat romantic pursuits were both brought to a close by the resolution of his father to send him to England. In this affair the son appears to have been actuated by a sense of duty rather than by the inclination to migrate which is said to be a second nature with the Scot. He desired, above all things, to avoid the possibility of becoming burdensome to his parents. A son of one of their neighbours was residing in the eastern counties; and thither John Hannah bent his steps. He had arrived at the age of manhood when he settled, as a lodger, at Diss, on the border of Norfolk and Suffolk, and employed himself in perambulating the vicinity on foot, trading from house to house.

Such a pursuit gained for him few introductions to the reading circle which even a country town can sometimes furnish. Its fashions and frivolities he could afford to hold very cheap. In his long and solitary rambles he found resources in books and nature, in

quiet thought and pure feeling. History and poetry,—Hume and Robertson, Shakspeare, Allan Ramsay and Burns, the Ettrick shepherd, and the then ‘great unknown’—were his companions. He read, alternately, some favourite author and, with a not less intelligent eye, the simple beauties of the country; or he murmured his own rhymes to the hedgerows, and then beguiled the evening hour by writing them down.

In person he was, at that time, athletic, but comparatively slender. His general aspect was unassuming and grave, with occasional gleams of intelligence and vivacity falling away into that pensive expression which is traceable in the portrait prefixed to this volume. Though retiring, he was not morose; and if his manners wanted refinement, he never failed in that politeness which consists in habitual deference to the comfort and gratification of others. A society of three or four young men, who met for mutual improvement, elicited proof of his natural talent and of his real modesty. Some of his essays were full of good sense. An extract from one of them is given by way of appendix to his ‘Rhymes,’ as a specimen of his style and manner of thinking in plain prose.

It was while he lived at Diss that the greater part of the verses contained in the subjoined pages were written. They relate to scenes and occurrences which passed



around him, or upon which memory lingered; to the claims of friendship and sympathy; and sometimes to themes of higher moment.

The first and longest of the poems here printed was an expression of his firm faith in the progress of knowledge and improvement, uttered at a period when that faith was not so general as it is now. Steam had not yet been commonly applied to 'iron roads.' Public health was disregarded, or it was partially secured in defiance of arrangements which are now understood to be fatal to its full enjoyment. Many looked with distrust upon the spread of education among the poor, lest they should be unduly elevated by those efforts which have been found, alas! totally inadequate to uphold on the level of civilization the accumulating millions. It may be curious, now that a quarter of the century to which the 'Vision' attributes so marvellous a change has elapsed, to note how far and in what form the predictions of the seer are fulfilling or fulfilled in the locality to which they refer. Upon the bosom of the 'sluggard Waveney' improvement has not come; nor have the borders of 'the lake' realized the poet's dream of beauty; neither destruction nor architecture has accomplished literally all that was foretold.

Yet there, as elsewhere, buildings have been re-erected, and streets macadamized; and 'the power of

steam' has been introduced in the most efficient manner. Measures have been suggested for abating the injurious effects of a large stagnant pool, and even for constructing 'public walks entirely around it, which,' it is said, and said officially, 'would probably be unequalled in the country for beauty!'<sup>\*</sup> On its 'western shore' has been built, in sober truth, one of the villas

'such as gaily rise  
Beneath Italia's genial skies.'

Better than all, it may be hoped that bigotry of every shape, by a slower but not less sure process, has been wearing away, and a more genuine sympathy introduced among individuals of every grade.

The poem on 'Time' is a meditation in one of its author's walks to Framlingham, the site of the ruined castle of the Bigods, earls of Norfolk. That building was afterwards in the hands, successively, of the Mowbrays and Howards; and finally of Sir Robert Hitcham, who devised it to the Master and Fellows of Pembroke hall, Cambridge, with the ruthless stipulation that the interior should be pulled down and applied to other purposes. It might seem a bitter sarcasm upon such a proceeding, that, in 1724, a parish workhouse was built in the vacant area.

<sup>\*</sup> Report to the General Board of Health on an enquiry into the sanitary condition of Diss. By William Lee esq., 1850, p. 28.

The rest of the verses printed are lyrical or miscellaneous. Except the song intituled 'The Orwell' and the lines on 'Freston Tower,' it is not probable that any one of the pieces was written with a view to publication. They were the free effusions of a heart full of rich and right feeling. And as they were intended to gratify the eye of friendship they may well serve to foster its memory.

Nor let it pass unnoticed that, in the full vigour of life, before the deep furrow of care had been traced across his brow, John Hannah sometimes gave a thought to other than earthly themes: while he never yielded to sickly melancholy or was guilty of hypocrisy, he

'Could pause an hour to pen a serious rhyme.'

In April 1829 he was induced to enter upon a commercial engagement at Ipswich. The claims of business and, at length, domestic duties and cares gradually diverted his attention, not entirely from intellectual pursuits, but from the rhyming mood.

The joys and the cares of life came to him, as to all, hand in hand. His hearth was cheered by the smile of conjugal and infantile affection. But sorrow waited before the door, and a leaden cloud at length settled over his prospects. With many a painful thought, but

with integrity unscathed, he left Ipswich, and went to reside at Burton upon Trent, where he ended his days.

Coming griefs had 'cast their shadows before.' Other and more bitter calamity awaited him. After a few years, during which his commercial position had been more encouraging, he found himself a widower with four small children. His friends rallied around him with their sympathy, their counsel, and their aid.

The esteem in which he was held was even more conspicuous when, towards the close of 1852, a painful and alarming disease attacked his apparently robust frame. The best surgical advice was obtained. There was no hope. He returned home with the full conviction that he had only to resign himself to the will of an all-wise Creator and to prepare for a greater change than had hitherto befallen him. Disabled from active service, he was cheered by exemplary liberality and kindness on the part of his employer and others. But his motherless children were around him. There was one thought which his generous heart could not brook : it seemed probable that he might live to exhaust the slender provision he had made for them, and then leave them in indigence; and for their sakes *he wished to die*.

— To DIE. That thought opened a still deeper source of anxiety; and its flood rushed back upon his

spirit with overwhelming power. He had been a sincere admirer of christianity as exhibited in the persons and lives of its *true* disciples; but he felt that he had failed to act up to his convictions, or to submit himself unreservedly to its requirements. The heart had too much lingered amid earthly fascinations and had been too closely bound to temporal pursuits. He had not — how frequent the case! — thrown himself in wilful and determined rebellion into the ranks of the scoffer and the depraved: he had never neglected altogether the claims of the sabbath, the reading of the holy Scriptures, or to offer his petitions at the throne of mercy. But the period had arrived when he needed consolation such as neither the kindness of friends nor the consciousness of moral rectitude and outward propriety could yield.

During his last illness he received many welcome visits from an excellent clergyman in Burton and, by his conversation, was induced to resort with increased eagerness to that best source of hope which is ‘a well of water springing up to everlasting life.’ As the eternal world drew near he regarded his entrance upon its dread realities with a solemnity unknown to him before. He now placed no reliance upon the fine moral instinct which had seemed to others so beautiful. Those hours of his past life which had been given to grave reflections and religious engagements and companionships now

seemed to him to have been, above all others, well spent : the rest almost unmingled 'vanity and vexation,' or sinful negligence and folly. Earnest and constant in prayer for divine *mercy*, he declared that he looked for pardon and sought salvation only through the great sacrifice for sin. Nor did he seek in vain. But his humble trust was mingled with intense anxiety. And there is reason to believe he would have deprecated, with his whole heart, the thought that any individual should be tempted, by his example, to postpone life's greatest concern to an hour of pain and weakness, in the rash expectation that he would at last

'Improve the remnant of his wasted span,  
And, having lived a trifer, die a man.'

Mr. Hannah was not the subject of that delusive hope of recovery which often helps to support the timid spirit. Throughout his illness he had a vivid apprehension of its fatal ending. He looked back with warm affection and gratitude; and onward with steady, but not with reckless gaze. Three days before his death, his kind spiritual adviser having come early into his room and inquired how he was, he answered, with emphatic and characteristic firmness and seriousness—in a poet's words — 'Passing away, passing away!' The spirit was hovering, with awful poise, over the brink of eternity; but the light and the colouring of other days were still bright upon its wing.

On the morning of the 2nd of February 1854, with great calmness of mind and less of bodily suffering than had been expected, the intelligent, generous, and true-hearted John Hannah expired.

Many who knew and appreciated his sterling moral qualities may prefer to think of him in this aspect, and may, at first feel it an intrusion to find interposed between their minds and this idea, his sense of the beautiful and poetic. However, they will recognize in the following pages so many lineaments of his mind and heart, of his character and history, that none, probably, will regret to find himself the possessor of such a memorial.

One other mode there remains in which those who knew him have been prompt to honour his memory: they have not failed to regard with kind and active interest the chief objects of his earthly anxiety. The children of a man so truly unselfish, though orphans in a world of storms and darkness, will find friends for their father's sake, as well as a secure refuge in the almighty 'Helper of the fatherless.'

These 'Posthumous Rhymes' are the product of a vigorous mind and a guileless heart, not of careful cultivation or of taste artificially refined. They appeal to the eye of friendship, not of criticism. A few wild flowers are here scattered on the grave of him who gathered them.

If they are of too stunted growth to win the notice of a stranger, they possess enough beauty and fragrance to indicate how much is *lost* when a soil of promise is left to spontaneous productiveness or scanty tillage. Who can estimate the worth to society of a character such as John Hannah would have exhibited if he had been brought under the influence of education, mental, moral, and religious, in its best and most efficient forms, and trained to high purposes and worthy scenes of action? On the other hand, it is sad to think that, in the absence of such preparation, many a neglected Watt, many a discouraged Howard, many a 'mute inglorious Milton' may be even now growing up to an unprofitable manhood. Noble faculties and moral greatness too often fail to yield appropriate fruit, where it is impossible not to believe that the adoption of proper means of culture would have led to a very different result. Men spend life in feeble, unavailing efforts or in 'laboriously doing nothing,' and then pass away and are forgotten who, under more favourable auspices, would have become bright centres of ever extending and multiplying good, and might have justly occupied a far larger 'space in the world's thought.'

S. W. R.

*Beccles,*

*August, 1854.*



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**POSTHUMOUS RHYMES.**

---

TO ——— .

---

My friend, accept the lay thyself inspired,  
Though all unworthy of the theme and thee :  
Unblessed by learning, nor by genius fired,  
Not mine the exalted charms of minstrelsy.  
Albeit to fame my soul hath not aspired,  
Think me not wholly from ambition free :  
But it ne'er prompts a wish to be admired  
By thousands; — vain indeed such hope in me ; —  
Enough, and all I ever have desired,  
If in these pages thou perchance may'st see  
One thought to nature true. Have I required  
A palm of which thou deem'st my poetry  
Unworthy? — well, the *poet* shall not grieve,  
If worthy thine esteem the *man* thou should'st believe.

J. H.

15th July, 1828.

## POSTHUMOUS RHYMES.

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### A VISION.

---

THE noontide heat had passed away,  
And gloaming spread its mantle grey;  
And distant objects, half concealed,  
Half through a silvery veil revealed,  
In doubtful guises met the eye,  
Like visions of futurity.  
I stood upon a gentle hill,  
And all around, above, was still;  
Save when the beetle's heavy drone  
Just struck the ear and then was gone,  
Or Philomela's song of love  
Was wafted from the neighbouring grove,

Soft as the magic carolled stave  
Is heard above Zuleika's grave.  
The noise of men, the hum of bees,  
Had ceased; and flowers and lofty trees  
Were motionless almost as death,  
Fanned by the zephyr's gentlest breath,  
Which came o'er bean-fields full in bloom,  
Laden with exquisite perfume;  
And the white mists were floating by  
So smoothly and so tranquilly,  
You might have deemed that vale to be  
An inlet of a summer sea,  
And those aspiring tops of willows  
Ships bosomed on the quiet billows.

A town beyond the valley stood,—  
Like clouds in a fantastic mood  
That pile on pile encamping lie  
Far in the glowing, western sky;  
Or like that city where the ban  
Of heaven was laid on guilty man

And — if the legend has not lied —  
Each living thing was petrified;\*  
So — silent all the noise and strife  
That mark the busy scenes of life —  
It lay before me: not a light  
From shop or lattice met the sight.  
Nor turned the mind to other thought  
Than its own musings over-wrought.  
The cresset moon in majesty  
Rode midway in the azure sky,  
And the most brilliant stars were seen  
In prompt attendance on their queen;  
The fleecy clouds, disparted wide,  
Fell gracefully on either side;  
And pencilled on each ample fold  
Were glowing streaks like molten gold.

Oh, who that scene could contemplate  
And deem that it could emanate  
From chance? or turn a sceptic eye  
Up to that bright cerulean sky,

\* Story of Zobeide, Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

Studded with all those orbs of fire,  
And not confess, adore, admire,  
And bow in humbleness of soul  
Before the God who made and still supports  
the whole ?

The tranquil beauty of the scene,  
The liveness of that solemn spot —  
For near me rose the hillock green  
O'er many once beloved, whose lot  
Is now forgetfulness — spread through  
My breast a feeling sweet and new.  
'Twas joyous, but it was not gladness,  
'Twas pensive, but it was not sadness;  
A feeling where all feelings blended,  
Yet all external sense seemed ended;  
As if the soul had burst away  
From its frail barrier of clay  
And ranged, exulting to be free  
From shackles of mortality,  
And all that bounds the narrow ken  
Of knowledge to the sons of men

Within the horizon of a taper  
Had vanished like a morning vapour.  
The veil that hides from human pride  
Futurity, was drawn aside;  
And myriads of coming years,  
With all their virtues, crimes, hopes, fears,  
Shadowed in characters sublime,  
Stood ready, at the call of time,  
In forms more tangible to start,  
As figures by the painter's art.

So have I strayed where mountains high  
Reared their bald foreheads to the sky,  
And dark fogs covered all below; —  
When the sea-breeze began to blow,  
Have seen the mists back rolled away  
And the fair landscape smiling gay.  
And widening on either hand,  
As still the vapours dank expand,  
New objects brightening one by one,  
Fall the enraptured eye upon.

And while the temporary night  
Flees from the fast advancing light,  
Wider and wider grows the view;  
And yet more eager I pursue  
Over the hills and shaggy fells,  
All purpled gay with heather bells,  
And where the gow-cock whirring flies,  
And where the plaintive plover cries;  
And now, below, I look far down  
Upon the farm, the tower, the town,  
And upon yonder fertile plain,  
Where richly waves the yellow grain,  
And all along the flowery mead  
The lowing kine repose and feed.  
But lo! old ocean now appears,  
And proud his sparkling crest he rears,  
And now before the favouring gale  
Many a vessel spreads the sail:  
Some court the breeze and leave the land  
For a far distant foreign strand;  
While others gladly near the shore,  
Escaped the tempest's rage once more;



And tiny barks, in creek and bay,  
Unfold their pinions white and gay.  
Now, where the mists of late surrounded,  
Nought intercepts the eye's swift glance;  
By its own weakness only bounded,  
Or the horizon's wide expanse. —

Thus backward rolled the awful gloom  
That shrouds futurity — the womb  
Of ages yet unborn, that lie  
Enveloped in obscurity.  
Thus traced I on, from year to year,  
What revolutions shall appear,  
What creeds shall rise and what shall fall,  
Or moral, or political.  
I saw the arts, from stage to stage,  
Progressive rise from youth to age,  
And many to perfection brought  
Which now lie buried in the thought  
Of man, till they by chance are found —  
Like treasures, hidden underground,

Near some old ruined tower or cell,  
Brought up when peasants dig a well.

I saw—but vainly would I sing  
What wonders did that vision bring  
To light: as vainly would you count  
The innumerably vast amount  
Of stars at midnight that display  
Their glories in the milky way;  
Or number, when the rising breeze  
Shakes to and fro yon forest trees,  
The leaves that deck those trembling boughs,  
Or strew the ground, when autumn blows.  
I saw whatever man shall see,  
I saw whatever man shall be;  
More saw I then than tongue may tell—  
Strange and incomprehensible!

Amid the mysteries of that hour,  
When, by some strange and unknown power,  
Things which to mortal eyes are sealed  
Were clearly to my mind revealed,

And passed before it, one and all,  
Like magic figures on a wall,  
I saw a town — of small dimensions,  
Which yet to wealth made some pretensions,  
And all within it had an air  
That told of comfort reigning there.  
I knew it not at first, but knew  
It was no stranger to my view;  
For time and circumstances bring  
Changes o'er each created thing.  
And they who live when to the past  
A hundred fleeting years are cast,  
Such changes as I saw shall see  
Have taken place, — and it may be,  
E'en as it then appeared to me.

Far as the eye could reach were seen,  
With daisy-covered lawns between,  
Each after each, in bright succession,  
Of happiness the glad possession,  
Sweet villas, such as gaily rise  
Beneath Italia's genial skies.

Around them grew a rich profusion,  
Trees, shrubs, and flowers, in fair confusion;  
The vines aloft their tendrils flung,  
And fondly round each object clung,  
And bore a rich luxuriant hoard  
To deck and cheer the festive board.  
Glowing beneath their leaves of green,  
The peach and nectarine were seen;  
And every fruit that charms the eye,  
Courts or allays satiety;  
And roses red and lilies white,  
Entwining gay and sweet and bright,  
And plants for scent or beauty rare,  
Or curious leaf or petal fair,  
Sprung up in rich abundance there.

No more does summer's scorching beam  
Dry up old Waveney's sluggard stream,  
And leave the hapless fish to lie  
Gasping for water, till it die.  
No more it creeps ingloriously  
Through weeds and sedges to the sea;

For lo, its waters, broad and deep,  
Far down the winding valley sweep;  
And many a bark is seen to glide  
Along in triumph and in pride,  
With streamer floating fair and gay.  
Some bounded on their watery way,  
While lightly curling round their prows  
The cloven waters gurgling rose;  
In pleasure's track they skimmed along,  
And left behind the voice of song.  
Others, with deeply sunken side,  
And heavy motion through the tide,  
Poured forth on high an eddying stream  
Of smoke: they owned the power of steam.  
Others upon the lake's smooth breast  
Lay floating tranquilly at rest;  
While round and round a spacious quay  
Was built for their conveniency;  
And all the aids which art and care  
Had given to commerce—all were there.

But who may paint in language meet  
The scene, with beauty so replete,

I saw yon western shore disclose ;  
Where gardens, gay and fair as those  
That decked the banks of Bendemeer  
Or verdant vale of famed Cashmere,  
Spread forth their charms of shrub and flower,  
Of sunny walk and shaded bower ?  
It was a scene on which the eye  
Dwells with such deep intensity,  
As quite absorbs all other sense,  
It draws such draughts of pleasure thence ;  
A scene which all, or more or less,  
May feel ; but few can e'er express  
Their notion of its loveliness.

When on the western ocean's bed  
The sun lay down his glowing head,  
And twilight reigned — delightful hour ! —  
And owned enchantment's 'witching power,  
And flung a joy around the heart  
Which gaudy noon can ne'er impart,  
Mortals forsook the busy town,  
With many an anxious thought bowed down,

And bade adieu awhile to care,  
And came to breathe a purer air,  
And felt the fevered pulse and brain  
Resume their wonted tone again,  
And owned how exquisite the bliss  
Of scene and hour so sweet as this.

And you might hear such light free laugh  
As bursts from youthful hearts, who quaff  
The stream of pleasure as they glide,  
Nor fear that the translucent tide  
Will ever run less pure, or they  
Have less occasion to be gay.  
Now o'er the velvet-covered lawn  
Trip they as sportive as the fawn;  
Now, 'midst entwining shrub and bower,  
In secret gleesomely they cower;  
Then, darting from their coverts, rise  
Before their playmates in surprise;  
While the loud scream that meets the ear  
Expresses both their mirth and fear.

Or in some sheltered sweet retreat,  
Hid from detraction's jaundiced view,  
See, at this hour, young lovers meet,  
And breathe their vows of love anew,  
And gaze upon the western sky  
Where massive clouds in splendour lie  
Pile upon pile, stupendous rolled,  
Like giant rocks of virgin gold ;  
While high upon yon poplar tall  
The latest sunbeams trembling fall ;  
And clear, mellifluous, and strong,  
The blackbird trills his evening song ;  
And bees forsake the honied flower,  
Save a few stragglers round their bower,  
Which, humming, sip the suckles sweet  
That twine around the sheltered seat ;  
And flowers are shutting up their gay  
Bright petals till another day,  
Yet yield a more delicious breath  
— Like virtue's memory after death —  
Than when, expanded full and wide,  
They bloomed in beauty and in pride.



And there, reviewing life's short day,  
The moralist—infirm and grey,  
With tottering step and movement slow,  
Looking around, above, below,  
Half wishing that his soul could rise  
And soar at once beyond the skies,  
And throw aside the load of years,  
And lose his pain and lose his fears,—  
Ponders the thoughtless youth around;  
And then the flower-enamelled ground;  
And feels how like that fragile flower  
Is man, his beauty and his power;  
And weeps to think those cheeks of bloom  
Must wither soon within the tomb;  
Or age among that glossy hair  
Will show its footstep here and there,  
And dim those eyes; or early tears  
May do the work of lingering years;  
How all their schemes of earthly bliss,  
Their morning dreams of happiness,  
Shall melt, like snow upon the river,  
Which now is seen, then lost for ever.

But other changes most momentous  
A hundred rolling years had sent us.  
I saw the streets all clean and wide,  
With footpaths broad on either side,  
— By tender toes how highly prized! —  
The centre too macadamized,  
And terminating in a square  
Of buildings regular and fair.  
Butchers' and barbers' shops and blocks,  
And — terror of the rogue! — the stocks;  
And pot-houses, from whence a squall  
Of song not over musical  
Oft burst upon the ear of night,  
And woke the neighbours in affright;  
And ——— 's dispensary, who stitches  
Your constitution or your ——— ;  
Whose manual proves he far surpasses  
In skill the most elaborate asses,  
Who learn, at colleges and schools,  
Sufficient just to make them fools! —  
All these were swept away, I ween,  
As if such things had never been ;

And in the area rose a chaste  
Fair specimen of Grecian taste,  
A temple light and elegant  
As poets sing or artists paint;  
To which I saw, of high and low,  
A numerous throng pass to and fro.  
I stood astonished, marvelling  
What sight could thus together bring  
Those of such different rank and age,  
The rich and poor, the young and sage;  
And thought perchance the place might be  
A play-house or menagerie;  
But soon I found, from what they bore,  
That here had knowledge her rich store —  
A public institution, where  
All ranks, conditions, might repair,  
And cull from wisdom's fairest pages  
The lore of else forgotten ages;  
Nor deemed they then, as many deem  
It all unworthy their esteem,  
And only meant, so let it be,  
For vulgar folk of low degree.

I saw a building ruined lie, —  
A temple once of the Most high.  
Why was it ruined thus? In sooth,  
They said 'twas in the cause of truth.  
The worshippers, it seems, had all  
In doctrines grown quite critical;  
And you might see those sages stand,  
With finger raised and outspread hand,  
Scanning each point of every creed,  
—To practice paying little heed —  
And proving, clear as clear could be,  
Their own infallibility!  
True, notwithstanding their discerning,  
They no pretensions had to learning,  
But just distinguished 'orthodox'  
By scent — as hounds find out a fox.  
Sometimes things did not quite alike  
Their faculties or senses strike;  
And truth at length became a stone  
Of stumbling to their feet, a bone  
O'er which they stood and growled and snarled,  
Until, like other curs, they quarrelled,

And, in their eagerness, forgot  
Or, what was worse, they heeded not  
This truth,—how simple yet how grand!—  
‘A house divided cannot stand.’  
It stood not—stands not now; each prop  
That long had held the fabric up  
Had mouldered—dropped away,—and none  
Supplied the place when they were gone;  
But thorns and briars and nettles tall  
Sprung up within the ruined wall.

Alas, what trivial things divide  
Friends, kindred, from each others' side;  
A minor point of creed, a name,  
Will kindle wild dissension's flame,  
And rend asunder every tie  
That binds in love society,  
And jealousy and hate instil,  
And poison all the heart, and kill  
Each social feeling, and control  
The best affections of the soul.  
But men begin to burst the chain  
By bigots forged to bind—how vain!

The aspirations of the mind,  
Whose wondrous range is undefined;  
And, from ten thousand points ascending,  
The rays harmoniously blending  
Their light, are darting gloriously  
From every heart and every eye,  
On ignorance, that fiend how fell!  
That poisons earth and peoples hell.  
So birds obscene, that love the night,  
Flee screaming fast before the light;  
So noxious damps the earth beneath  
— Their every respiration death —  
Disperse and soon dissolve away,  
When opened to the light of day;  
And hellish imps, as grandams tell,  
Flee to their caves with horrid yell,  
When the cock's clarion, loud and shrill,  
Proclaims day breaking on the hill.

In vain you sneer, and scoff, and boast;  
The rocky band that guards the coast  
Shall fall before the dashing sea  
That 'gainst it roars incessantly,

Ere knowledge fall before the surge  
That tyrants 'gainst her bulwarks urge;  
The fires, that deeply hidden, pent  
In Hecla's bosom, shall have vent  
No surer than the human soul  
Shall burst from bigotry's control.

And men *had* burst its bonds; and hence  
In friendship and in confidence,  
No more by hate or fear divided,  
For name or creed no more derided,  
I saw them mingle lovingly,  
As brothers of one family;  
Envy and self no more combined  
To steel the heart and taint the mind;  
The channels of their charity  
And love were unconfined and free,  
Reaching to all of human birth,  
Ev'n to the boundaries of the earth.

. . . . .

Hark! through the breathless air the bell,  
From yon time-fretted tower,

Proclaims with melancholy knell  
The solemn midnight hour,  
When spirits of the unhappy dead  
Forsake their narrow restless bed,  
To hold, beneath some blasted tree,  
Their horror-breathing revelry.—  
I started with instinctive dread,  
And swift as thought—the vision fled!  
Ev'n as the clouds of yesterday,  
Which left no trace of where they lay,  
So passed it; but it left behind  
Its deep impression on the mind.  
And long I strove but strove in vain,  
To keep or call it back again.  
I looked around: the landscape still  
Lay calm beneath that gentle hill;  
And, high above, the silver moon  
Rode lovely in nocturnal noon.

A momentary tremor came  
Across my soul and o'er my frame,  
As the night-hawk, the silence breaking,  
Passed swiftly near me, wildly shrieking;



And glaring moon-beams coldly fell  
On the few monuments that tell  
The tale of those who lie beneath,  
Who lived, and loved, and sleep in death —  
These stones, to point the loved one's grave,  
Gushing affection weeping gave.

My blood was chilled with standing there;  
The night dews hung upon my hair;  
And, pondering much if it might be  
A fancy or reality,  
I sought my home: methought some rest  
Might chase the vision from my breast.  
But it would not be driven thence,  
Or came again with force intense;  
And best it seemed, in humble guise,  
To tell what passed before my eyes.

*July, 1828.*

## TIME.

---

Spirit of Time !— who lov'st, when night dews fall,  
By ruined porch or ivy-covered wall,  
Or 'neath some mouldering buttress' friendly shade,  
To muse upon the wreck thy hand hath made,  
While fitfully, through roofless galleries,  
The chilling night-breeze melancholy sighs,  
And sings her dulsome note the bird of night,  
And sportive bats wheel round in mazy flight,—  
Fain would I trace, if human eye may scan,  
Thy wasting march to where it first began,  
And snatch from cold oblivion's gloomy night  
Some scattered trophies of thine ancient might.

But ah ! what mortal vision shall explore,  
What mortal tongue can tell thy triumphs o'er?

Alas ! not mine the magic power to bring  
A sound responsive from each trembling string,  
Enchanting notes, beyond the power of art,  
To soothe, refine, arouse, subdue the heart ;  
Nor mine to tread where science loves to stray,  
Where knowledge lingers and the graces play,  
The path of learning — to the favoured few  
Wide open thrown, but hidden from my view.  
Shall he to whom art, nature hath not given  
Wisdom or genius choicest gifts of heaven,  
Shall he attempt thy footsteps, Time ! to trace ?  
Alas, in vain : as when the orb-dimmed face  
Turns to yon spangled sky to search afar,  
'Midst crowding myriads, for some favourite star.

When out of chaos and the realms of night  
God formed the world, and said ' Let there be light,'  
And the first morn arose and saw it lie  
All good and fair beneath its Maker's eye ;  
'Twas then thy reign began ; nor yet thy breath  
Was tainted with decay, or grief, or death.  
So in the tripping footsteps of young May  
Spring health and beauty. But thy gentle sway

Lasted not long ; for man became estranged  
From God, and all the bent of nature changed.  
Then, as on moorland heights the shepherd's fire  
Sweeps the dry heath away, in sudden ire  
Thy course destructive overwhelmed the world,  
And man and all his toys to ruin hurled.

Age hath not damped thy fury ; nor can stay  
A thousand worlds thine appetite for prey.  
But still thou marchest on with rapid stride,  
Wild devastation spreading far and wide ;  
Or by the gnawing worm of slow disease,  
Or by the raging tempest, the wild seas,  
The earthquake, the volcano, famine, war,  
Pestilence — every evil that afar  
Rides on the tainted breeze and arms with death  
The fogs of Nile, or Afric's burning breath.  
These are thine agents, these and thousands more  
Are still purveying for thy greedy store ;  
Sparing nor age, nor sex, nor tongue, nor clime,  
Nor work of man, nor nature more sublime :  
The gorgeous palace and the humbler cot,  
All are, or shall become, as they were not.

As from some Alpine mountain's lofty brow  
The avalanche, thundering, seeks the plain below,  
Bearing, as with a strong, resistless tide,  
At once the lofty pine that decks its side  
And lowly shrub, that blossoms all unseen  
And spreads amidst the crag its leaflets green.

Where now the men that erst were wont to sway  
The world's wide empire? Where departed they  
Whose eloquence could rouse a nation's rage,  
Or, having roused, its frenzy could assuage?  
Mute is the silvery tongue; the powerful hand  
Moulders, unnerved, beside the harmless brand;  
And in the field where men were wont to reap  
Their bloody harvest, feeds the timid sheep;  
While on the hearths of once imperial halls  
The jackall slumbers, and the turtle crawls;  
And they have yielded, mighty Time! to thee  
Their boasted claim to immortality.  
Or if, far down the darksome vale of years,  
Like a faint star, some mighty mind appears,  
A dubious name is all that now survives.  
So he who sang Achilles' wrath still lives,

But what his race, his real identity,  
Where born or taught, where he doth lowly lie,  
No human tongue can tell; nor mind can trace  
His life, his features, or his dwelling-place:  
All save a name are to oblivion flung,  
And that left doubtful as the Troy he sung.  
Such are thy triumphs, all-destroying Time!  
Through every age and country, tongue and clime;  
Races and empires have their short-lived day—  
Spring up, are founded, flourish, and decay.

Here, while I wander, 'mongst these dewy fields,  
Rich with the plenty bounteous nature yields,  
My eyes survey yon venerable towers,  
Where monarchs oft found refuge; when the powers  
Of Denmark swept o'er Anglia's fertile plains,  
And spread red ruin through her fair domains.  
Hither they came; as to the nearest rock  
The seaman flies, when the o'erwhelming shock  
Of the wild winds and the tumultuous waves  
Shatters his bark into a thousand staves.  
And whither fled thy princely glories now  
Fair Framlingham? What hand hath shorn thy brow

Of all its splendour? Where the pompous throng,  
Children of war, wine, wassail, dance, and song  
That made thy halls resound with mirth?—all fled,  
To seek a common refuge with the dead;  
And in thy courts, where kings and princes strode,  
The pauper makes his cheerless, mean abode.  
Yet 'mong the ruined walls I love to trace  
Thine ancient grandeur: as upon the face  
Of aged matrons lingering traits are seen  
Which tell of beauty that *there* once hath been;  
Thus 'midst the ravages of time, the eye  
Is still attracted by thy bearing high;  
Fondly surveys each buttress, gate, and tower,  
That tells in former days how great thy power.  
Across these piers, where weeds and ivy grow,  
The draw-bridge safely spanned the moat below,  
While from yon ruined porch, at peep of day,  
Forth issued lord and knight and lady gay,  
To wake the deer with merry hound and horn,  
Their faces fresh and radiant as the morn;  
Or the bold baron led his long array  
Of steel-clad warriors to more deadly fray,

While echoed court and tower the trumpet's sound,  
And steeds, impatient, neighing, pawed the ground.  
And where the wall-flowers on yon turret wave,  
Like a gay banner on a warrior's grave,  
Hath trod the sentinel's firm step and slow,  
His keen eye watchful of the coming foe.

And when at eve, from chase or war returned  
Warrior and dame: and bright the faggot burned  
Upon the ample hearth, while circled round  
The inspiring bowl with sparkling plenty crowned;  
These walls, now shattered, desolate, and grey,  
Have oft re-echoed to the minstrel's lay.  
He sings of princess fair in magic bower,  
Of gallant knight who broke the enchantment's power;  
Or bolder strains, of those who fought and fell,  
With English Richard 'gainst the infidel;  
And the grey bard, soon with the subject fired,  
Feels his own soul with sudden rage inspired,  
Pours forth such torrents of heroic song  
As steal the senses of the listening throng;  
And, quite transported by the minstrel's wrath,  
They dream of sudden strife and fields of death,



And grasp the sword, and knit the teeth and brow,  
And guard, and strike, and overcome the foe ;  
Till ebbs their fury as the powerful lay,  
Softening to notes harmonic, dies away.

Thus while I ponder, — in the evening hour  
When Phœbus' lengthen'd march hath spent his power,  
And cooling breezes, as they softly pass,  
Breathe sweetest odour of the new-mown grass ;—  
Thus while I ponder, fancy's powerful aid  
Restores each breach Time's ruthless hand hath made,  
Calls back to being ruined court and wall,  
And arms the tower and mans the rampart tall ;  
And issuing forth I see the feudal train  
Wheel, charge, encounter, triumph on the plain.

But hark ! soft stealing through the calm profound  
Comes music, — other than the trumpet's sound,  
Other than roused our warlike sires of old  
To acts of blood and enterprises bold,  
When superstition led her stalwart band  
To deeds unholy in the Holy Land.

. . . . .

Simple — not less acceptable on high  
The peasant's strain for its simplicity:  
Yea, as of old the shepherd's sacrifice  
With sweetest savour towering sought the skies,  
So, all unvarnished with the gloss of art,  
The grateful offering of the peasant's heart.  
So is his hope, if faith inspire the strain,  
Borne on her wing beyond the reach of pain,  
To dwell for ever in that blissful clime,  
In mansions free from the decay of Time.

*April*, 1828.

## THE BAIRNIE'S POOL:

OR, MY GRANNIE'S TALE.

---

November winds wi' eerie sough  
    Cam' rifting down the neighbouring glen,  
The wearied lads had left the plough,  
    The dinner o'er — the wheels brought ben.

The ingle bleezed fu' high and clear,  
    And shed around its genial heat;  
The ploughman mended Bawsie's gear,  
    The shepherd darn'd his stocking feet.

The lasses lilted as they spun;  
    My grannie sat the yarn to reel;  
While uncle Willie cleans his gun,  
    And Johnnie mends the prato creel.

As thus wi' eydent hand they plied  
Ilk ane their task, baith lad and lass,  
'An awfu' night!' my grannie cried,  
'Hear how the rain beats on the glass;

'And hark! wi' what a fearfu' roar  
The burn is dashing o'er the linn:  
I dinna min' a night before  
Sae dreadful — saving only ane.

'Tho' three score years and ten, I ween,  
Sin' then hae pass'd out o'er this pow,  
I min' that night as well's yestreen,  
An' think I hear that storm e'en now:

'Sae shot the lightning 'cross the lift,  
Sae loud and lang the thunder roared,  
Sae came the win' wi' sudden rift,  
Sae doon the rain in torrents poured.

‘My faither sat ayont the fire,  
And pitied them wha had to dree  
The ragin’ tempest’s vengefu’ ire;—  
For aye a pitying heart had he.

‘Heaven gie us thankfu’ hearts, he cried,  
For a’ the blessings we possess;  
For hame, for fire, for food, and bed,  
In sic a dreary night as this;

‘While mony a weary wanderer’s head  
Maun bide the pelting of the blast,  
Perchance without a bit of bread,  
To break his long unbroken fast;—

‘Hopeless and worn, nae comfort near,  
Nor more his feeble limbs can strain,  
But drooping, like the leaflet sear,  
He sinks on the unshelter’d plain!—

'His heart was fu'—he could na mair  
His tale of fancied wae pursue;—  
But aye the thunders louder rair,  
And fiercer yet the tempest blew.

'And oft was borne upon the gale  
A wild and mournfu' scream of grief,  
Mair wild an' mournfu' than the wail  
Of clansmen o'er their fallen chief!

'My faither said it was the win'  
That skirled aroun' the auld lum tap;  
But strong emotion showed within  
He sairly dreed some sad mishap.

'Nae earthly blast, fu' weel he wot,  
Was ever half so wild an' eerie;  
Naught but the water-kelpie's note  
Could strike the heart sae sad and dreary.

'Twa bairns had left their hame that day,  
On errands to the neighbouring town,  
But coming hame they tint their way,  
An' wandered till the spaits came down.

'Attracted by its sullen roar  
They found the ford aboon the linn;  
An' tho' the banks were brimming o'er,  
Yet hand in hand they ventured in.

'Poor things! how could their feeble limbs  
Against that current's rage prevail?  
The stoutest herd the hill that climbs  
Durst na' that night that stream assail.

'Tis vain that they its strength oppose;  
In vain for help they spend their breath,  
The waters soon aboon them close,  
Their feeble cries are lost in death.

'And ah! in vain, ye parents dear,  
Your childrens' absence sair ye mourn:  
Ye call — their names they canna hear;  
Ye look, but they will ne'er return.

'Deep, deep in Garoch's rocky bed  
Your bonny bairns fu' soun' are sleeping,  
Unmindfu' though aroun' their head  
Its angry waters wild are sweeping.

'Neist day their lifeless forms they foun';  
In ither's arms fu' sweet they lay,  
In yon deep pool so dark and lown,  
That bears their name this very day.

''Twas there that doited Davy Caa,  
Ae night as he came dandering hame,  
Saw something white like driven snaw  
Bob 'cross the pool as light as faem.



'An' yearly on that dreary night  
Is heard a cry of wae and dool,  
An' seen the dead fire's glimmering light  
To hover o'er The Bairnie's Pool.'

*December 2nd, 1826.*

## ELLEN AND THE BANKS OF CREE.

---

Young Edwin's gone to Ellen's bower,  
His lip has felt the parting kiss;  
Soft sorrow on his brow did lower,  
And tear-drops mingled with the bliss :  
'Farewell! I go, perchance, to see  
No more my Ellen, nor the Cree.'

Young Edwin felt the sacred glow  
Of honour all his soul inflame,  
And burned to meet the ruthless foe  
And earn a wreath of martial fame;  
To fight for home and liberty,  
His Ellen and the banks of Cree.

For these he left his Ellen's arms  
And crossed the foaming billows o'er,  
And rushed amid war's rude alarms,  
The sabre's flash and cannon's roar; —  
For honour, love, and liberty,  
His Ellen and the banks of Cree.

And still, when loudest pealed the gun,  
And fiercest rose the battle's yell,  
Where densest rolled the war-cloud dun,  
And the most heroes fought and fell,  
He stood and shouted 'Liberty! —  
'For Ellen, and the banks of Cree!'

Alas, upon thy fatal shore,  
Corunna, Edwin died at last;  
He fell beside the gallant Moore;  
And as to heaven a look he cast,  
He faintly breathed a prayer for thee,  
His Ellen, and the banks of Cree.

1827.

## WILLIE AND MARY.

---

Farewell, my love; but think not thou,  
When far from thee I stray the while,  
My heart shall e'er forget its vow,  
Or harbour treacherous thought of guile.  
Come, banish sorrow from thy brow,  
And smile as thou wert wont to smile,  
When life was young, and blithsomely  
We strayed along the banks of Cree.

Ha! dost thou weep to think that we  
May never wander there again?  
That ere the buds are on the tree,  
Or gowans stud with white the plain,

Far from my native land and thee,  
 Beyond the darkly heaving main,  
 A weary exile I shall be, —  
 Perchance no more to see the Cree?

Oh, chase away those idle fears,  
 Chase from thy mind those vain alarms;  
 At longest but a few short years  
 And I shall quit the trade of arms,  
 And kiss for aye away those tears,  
 And clasp, no more to yield, those charms —  
 Return, no more to part from thee,  
 My Mary, nor the banks of Cree.

The ship is riding in the bay;  
 The boats are manned, the sails are spread;  
 The bugles call — away, away! —  
 Young Willie tore him from the maid,  
 And joined the banner floating gay  
 O'er gallant troops in arms arrayed,  
 And sought the foe courageously,  
 Far from his Mary and the Cree.

Days, months, and seasons came and passed;  
The wintry winds aroused the deep,  
And Mary oft would walk aghast,  
Along the promontory steep;  
Or on her pillow list the blast;  
Or, if she closed her eyes in sleep,  
'Twas but to dream unceasingly  
Of Willie and the banks of Cree.

And when the spring bedecked the braes  
Of lang and bonny Carsencary,  
And birdies sung love's joys and waes,  
Nor bird nor flower had charms for Mary.  
She wandered there: it was to gaze,  
Until her aching eyes were weary,  
Upon the distant rolling sea,  
And think of *him* — far from the Cree.

And when in beauty and in bloom  
The summer clad the wood and wild,  
And richly waved the yellow broom,  
If chance she strayed at gloaming mild,

'Twas not to breathe the rich perfume:—

Oh! she was sad, though nature smiled;  
Her every thought was turned to thee,  
Her Willie, — far from bonnie Cree.

And autumn came: the harvest moon

Shone fair o'er corn fields waving strong;  
But dim to her was evening's noon,  
She loved not now the reaper's song.

Oft she would turn her eyes aboon

And sigh 'My Willie tarries long,  
Too long, alas, from love and me, —  
His Mary and the banks of Cree.'

At length the news came o'er the sea

Of battles won and cities ta'en —  
Oft triumph has a tearful e'e,  
The cup of joy is mixed with pain —  
And Britain shouted 'Victory!'

But wept o'er many a hero slain:  
Aboukir! Willie sleeps on thee, —  
His Mary on the banks of Cree!

1827.

## THE HOME OF YOUTH.

---

How sweet 'tis to wander alone in the gloaming,  
When the air is perfumed by the newly mown hay;  
And listen while thus you are carelessly roaming,  
The blackbird and thrush blithly sing from the spray.

And sweet 'tis to stand on the brow of yon mountain,  
And gaze on the ocean, the woodland and plain;  
And sweet in the desert the clear sparkling fountain  
To the long parching lip of the African swain.

And sweet to the mind is the dream of the morning,  
When the regions of fancy are open to view;  
Sweet the hope of our youth, in bright colours adorning  
Each scene of our life—too, too sweet to be true.

And oh, it is sweet to behold the young blossom  
Of childhood expand to the dawning of truth:—  
But sweeter than all, to the wanderer's bosom  
Is his far-distant home, the dear home of his youth!



## STANZAS

WRITTEN ON THE FLY LEAF OF HOGG'S 'QUEEN'S WAKE.'

---

Oh shepherd, take thy harp again,  
Nor let it longer silent lie  
Neglected in the braken glen:  
Awake anew its minstrelsy!

Now softly as on zephyr's wings  
Comes Philomela's evening strain,  
Wake the sweet magic of its strings,  
And thrill the raptured soul again.

Now wild and mournful as the breeze  
Which, when November's tempests sweep,  
Comes moaning through the leafless trees  
And stirs the horrors of the deep,

Pour forth the strange, romantic story,  
Of chilling power on every heart,  
Till shrouded spectres, ghastly, gory,  
Before the heated fancy start.

Or bear us to some lonely dell,  
Near Ettrick's braes or Yarrow's stream;  
Where, hid beneath the heather bell,  
Or riding on the moon's pale beam,

The tiny, wanton fairies sport,  
And dance and frolic on the green,  
Or fawning, flattering, make their court,  
Like other courtiers, to their queen.

But be it tale of fairy lore,  
Or woman's love, or deeds of glory  
Achieved by gallant knights of yore,  
Or horror-breathing spectre story, —

—Awake the wild harp's notes again!  
Nor, shepherd, let it longer lie  
Neglected in the braken glen;  
But wake, O wake its minstrelsy!

1828.

THE BARK.

---

The sun brightly shines on the ocean,  
And the billows so tranquilly lie,  
They seem to be scarcely in motion,  
Or but kiss the white pebbles and die.

There's a bark o'er the silvery waves dancing,  
With pinions wide spreading and gay;  
In the day-beam its gilt prow is glancing,  
As it bounds o'er the waters away.

There's a cloud gathering black in the heaven;  
There's a dark ruffled speck on the deep;  
Lo! the sky with red lightning is riven,  
And the strong pinioned winds fiercely sweep.

Where now is the bark that so gaily  
Danced along on the calm sunny sea?  
It has perished — as mortals do daily  
In the midst of their pride and their glee.

*May, 1828.*

SONG.

---

Philosophers vainly have striven to find

The secret of turning each substance to gold,  
And the precious elixir by which they designed  
To revive all the vigour of youth in the old.  
For, alas! the poor dotards just waked from their  
dreams

To find all their gold was converted to dross,  
And so eagerly searched for long life that, it seems,  
Death only came sooner their projects to cross.

But potent, beyond all the alchymist's art,  
Is this bumper — come pledge me! — you'll find  
it is true;

It will shed a bright halo of joy round the heart,  
And bury old troubles, past pleasures renew.

And what signify riches, if care cloud the brow?

Or life long extended, if wretched the while?  
We more than those sages e'er dreamed of  
have now

In the full flowing bumper and heart-beaming  
smile!

1831.

## FRESTON TOWER.

These lines were inserted, with a view of the picturesque building to which they refer, in Clarke's 'History and Description of Ipswich,' published by S. Piper in 1830.

Who can o'er thy summer tide,  
Winding Orwell, ever glide,  
Nor with raptured eye confess  
Many scenes of loveliness  
Spreading fair thy banks along,  
Subjects meet for poet's song?  
But the scene I love the best  
Here is faithfully expressed  
By the artist's skilful hand —  
Mightier than wizard's wand.

Yes! old Freston, stern and gray,  
Looking o'er the watery way,  
Hath, to me, more charms than all —  
Wooded park, or lordly hall.  
O! methinks 'twere sweet to lie,  
When the sun is riding high,

'Neath the shadow of these trees,  
On the daisied turf, at ease,  
Listening to the sheep-bells round,  
Tinkling with a silvery sound;  
Or, adown the vista bright,  
Watch the bark so trim and light;  
Or, upon yon turret high  
Turn a fixed and musing eye,  
Till the visions of the past  
O'er the mind come crowding fast;  
And, by fancy touched, ideal  
Things become as true as real,  
And unto the mind supply  
Pages lost to history.  
Here, perhaps, when winds were loud,  
And the seaman's guiding star  
Hid her face behind a cloud —  
Weeping o'er the drowning tar —  
Sat some young and lovely dame,  
Feeding well the beacon-flame,  
Striving vainly to discover,  
Through the gloom, her ocean rover.

Or, perchance, some hoary sage,  
Dread and wonder of the age,  
Here, at midnight calm, profound,  
Watched the planets in their round.  
Or the zealous devotee  
Here would bend repentant knee;  
Deeming fleshly penance can  
Cleanse the soul — mistaken man!  
Or the merry hunter here  
Spent the night with hearty cheer;  
Till the cry of hound and horn  
Woke the chase at peep of morn.

Thoughts like these my mind engage,  
Poring o'er this pictured page.  
Pen of mine may not reveal  
What the exile lone shall feel,  
When, beneath far distant skies,  
'Freston Tower' shall greet his eyes —  
He will own, with swelling heart,  
The power — the magic power — of ART.

## THE ORWELL:

A SONG.

---

These lines were set to music and published by the late well known composer of ballads, Nathan Sporic.

---

Oh, dear is the wood-skirted Orwell to me,  
With its rich rising upland and green sloping  
lawn;  
Where the lambkins in summer sport over the lea,  
And the daisy scarce bends 'neath the light  
bounding fawn.  
And I love by its brink, in the calm hour of  
gloaming,  
To muse while the zephyr comes stealing along,  
Or to catch, as it dies, in its soft modulation,  
The echo's reply to the boatmen's blithe song —

As cheerily down the yielding tide  
They speed with hearts so gay,  
Still singing, as they onward glide,  
Some merry roundelay!



'Tis not that its banks are the scene of my childhood,  
In memory still cherished though lost to the eye:  
Here is not the stern grandeur of crag and of  
wild-wood,

Or the mist-crested mountain that pierces the sky.  
Yet gratitude, love, binds my heart to the Orwell,  
For the home of the friends of my bosom is  
near;

And my soul must be dead to each manly emotion  
When its banks cannot charm, or *they* cease to  
be dear.

So cheerily down the Orwell's tide  
We'll speed with hearts so gay,  
Still singing, as we onward glide,  
Some merry roundelay!

1831.

## SONNET:

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

Years had flown on: in quick succession passed  
The changing seasons, rolling each on each,  
As the wild waves upon the lone sea beach;  
But nor the summer's sun, nor winter's blast,  
Nor spring, whose gentle breath dissolves the  
streams  
And wakens nature from her ice-bound dreams,  
To *her* brought liberty; but her high soul  
Disdained the hand that barred its house of clay;  
And, as the imprisoned eagle strives for day,  
So it, impatient of the dust's control,  
Was eager for release. What if the key  
Which bids it from its thralldom to be free  
Should be the blood-dyed axe, and the glad knell  
That welcomes its escape, her passing bell!

1827.

## SONNET

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. M — W — .

---

Can wealth or honour bribe the hand of death,  
Or gild the gloomy mansion of the grave?  
Can earthly power stretch forth its hand and save?  
Or bind the pinions of our fleeting breath?  
No; — but the keen, the eagle eye of faith  
Can gaze undazzled on a world to come,  
And penetrate, beyond the drear abyss,  
Into the region of eternal bliss:  
Faith hears, unmoved, the voice that summons home.  
Such faith supported thee, departed saint!  
Through all the trials of this thorny way;  
Still cheered thee when life's lamp burned dim  
and faint,  
And calmly sunk its last reflected ray  
In the dull shades of night, to emerge in endless  
day!

1827.

## SONNET

ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND'S CHILD.

Thou wert a lovely and a patient child ;  
Thy mild blue eyes were never dimmed with tears  
Of sullen discontent, but softly smiled  
With an expressiveness beyond thy years :  
How didst thou differ from thy young compeers !  
Calm in thy sorrow, gentle in thy mirth,  
The neighbours marked thee, and expressed their  
fears,  
And sighed, and sadly smiled to think a thing  
So beautiful must soon return to earth.  
Doth not the flower that soonest greets the spring,  
— The purest, fairest, — swiftest pass away,  
Nor stay to wither in the summer ray ?  
And heaven, in mercy, made a thing of light  
Of thee, ere sin could mar or folly's glare could  
blight.

1827.

## SONNET

WRITTEN IN A VOLUME OF 'AUTOGRAPHICAL MEMORIALS.'

---

Men are the sport of circumstances; they  
Can form no lasting friendships here below :  
Death, sickness, change of fortune, or of place,  
Time, envy, jealousy, — these can decay  
Impressions the most strong; yet we forego  
Unwillingly such joys; and they disgrace  
Our human nature who can turn away  
From those they love without a pang of woe,  
Or cast them careless from the mind's embrace.  
I would not thus forget, nor be forgot.  
Since of the past and absent we retrace  
In simple things the memory, let this book,  
When through its pages you excursive look,  
Thus speak for me—'My friend, FORGET ME NOT.'

1829.

THE LONELY STAR.

---

I strayed all alone, when the day was o'er,  
Where the billows dashed on the foaming shore,  
And sullen and dark was the earth; in the sky  
I saw but one star, burning tremulously.

I saw, by its faint and gentle ray,  
That a bark o'er the ocean pursued its way;  
And above the roar of the angry wave  
Was wafted the mariner's cheerful stave.

'Thou star of the north'! — such the mariner's  
theme —

'Thou fairest of stars, by whose radiant beam,  
When the wild waves rave and the tempests sweep,  
We fearlessly range o'er the midnight deep!

'The wanderer turns with a wistful eye  
To his home and the friends of his infancy;  
And the bridegroom gay to his blushing bride  
Who sits, in her beauty, by his side.

'And the young fond mother delights to gaze  
On her slumbering infant's angel face;—  
But the upturned eye of the venturous tar  
Rejoices in *thee*, lovely northern star!

'Unwavering orb! may thy heavenly ray  
Still light us along on our lonely way:  
O, still, when the waves and the tempests sweep,  
Be our guardian over the midnight deep!'

Here ceased the song; and the vessel was gone;  
But that star still in heaven's deep azure shone;  
And methought that it burned with increasing  
light  
As dark and more darkly came on the night.

Emblem, I cried, of the christian's stay,  
Of Him who illumines life's perilous way;  
As thou to the mariner, so to them  
Is the star, the bright star, of Bethlehem!

*October, 1826.*

## THE DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON FORETOLD.

---

O Babylon, thy might and thy beauty shall fade,  
And the pride of the Chaldees in ruins be laid;  
The bow shall be bent and unsheathed be the  
    sword  
To smite thee, as Sodom was smote by the Lord.

No more in thy streets shall the timbrel be heard,  
The song of the maid or the harp of the bard;  
Mute, mute shall each voice be, and withered  
    each hand:  
There wild desolation for ages shall stand.

And the wandering Arab shall shun thee, and roam  
Far, far in the wilderness seeking a home;  
Nor the shepherd his flock to the pasture shall lead  
By the brink of thy waters to gambol and feed.



But the owl shall inhabit thy palaces fair  
And fill, with her doleful complainings, the air ;  
And the dragon and satyr and beasts of the isles  
Like spectres shall glide 'mong the crumbling piles.

For thy dark cloud of sins hath ascended to  
    heaven,  
As the sand of the desert by hurricanes driven ;  
And the vengeance of God will come down on  
    thy head :  
Nor long shall the day of his wrath be delayed.

*January, 1827.*

## CHARITY.

---

WRITTEN FOR THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF  
A BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

---

Hail, christian charity! by heaven  
Designed to cheer life's rugged road;  
To whom the blissful task is given  
Of easing misery's heavy load,  
Of drying up her tearful eye,  
And chasing from her breast the sigh.

'Tis thine, when numerous ills impend  
Around the sick, infirm, and old,  
From gnawing hunger to defend,  
And shield them from the wintry cold;  
To blunt the pointed darts that fly  
From sorrow and adversity.

And when that awful hour draws near  
Which feeble nature dreads the most,  
When hope is fled, and guilt and fear  
Come in with memory's dreary host,  
And the sad soul is hovering nigh  
The brink of dread eternity, —

Thou seek'st the restless, lowly bed,  
And point'st to Him who can control  
Of punishment for sin the dread,  
And gild the darkness of the soul:  
Can change to joy the wild despair,  
And tune the heart to praise and prayer.

Such deeds as these ennoble more  
The christian, than his wealth or fame;  
They breathe of Him who calmly bore  
The depth of misery and shame,  
Who spent his life in 'doing good,'  
And shed, in Charity, his blood.

1827.

## THE BALM OF LIFE.

Mortal, as you onward stray  
O'er life's rough and devious path,  
What shall cheer you on your way?  
What can nerve your soul in death?

Can the stores that hidden lie  
Deep in India's golden mines?  
Richest robe of purest dye?  
Or the brightest gem that shines?

Can the wreath that binds the brow  
Of the pampered child of fame?  
Or the proudest name below?  
Or the monarch's diadem?

Ah, how impotent are these  
In the hour of racking pain,  
When the giant of disease  
Binds the strong in fiery chain!

How unable to support  
Trembling wretches when they lie  
Of their guilty fears the sport,  
Or to cheer them when they die!

Vain are all: God's holy word  
Can alone bring true relief,  
When affliction's vial's poured  
On the head in floods of grief.

This alone can yield the soul  
Healing streams of heavenly balm,  
Every rising fear control,  
Hush the conscience to a calm.

Let us then, while here below,  
Or in sickness or in health,  
Or in happiness or woe,  
Or in poverty or wealth,

Study well the sacred page,  
That from thence we may derive  
Strength in youth, support in age,  
Be prepared to die or live.

1829.

## HYMN

FOR A MEETING OF SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

---

Lord! let our evening sacrifice

With grateful savour rise to Thee:

Oh, Father! canst thou e'er despise

The offering of sincerity?

The aid we need, great God, bestow,

Scatter our ignorance, and shine

Through every heart with sacred glow;

Touch every lip with truth divine.

So will we teach our youthful band

Thy pure commandments to obey,

Thy hidden things to understand,

Point them to heaven, and lead the way.

Lord! let our evening sacrifice  
Ascend acceptable to Thee;  
Oh, Father! thou wilt not despise  
The offering of sincerity!

1829.





## Passages from an Essay on Novel-reading :

BY JOHN HANNAH.

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. . . The increased desire of information has not only augmented the diligence but the number of authors. The bold and enterprising have travelled into countries almost if not altogether unknown to the natives of Europe, and have opened new sources of information, while the less adventurous have been labouring to bring to light the hidden treasures of our own. Others, who in their youth lived a life of danger and vicissitude, or what to them seemed such, deeming their story too important to be forgotten with themselves or their hope of advantage from its publication too necessary or too alluring to be resisted, deal themselves out to 'an indulgent and generous public' in the shape of reminiscences, travels, journals, or adventures. While from these and other sources literature has received many valuable additions, it is not to be supposed that the fertile fields of Utopia have been forgotten or neglected. No such thing. The arrivals from that country have been both numerous and various. Her emissaries, no longer contented with making a story the vehicle of instruction or 'surprising levity into knowledge with a show of entertainment' have extended her pretensions to the regions of history, political economy, and divinity. In short, their enchanting wand but

touches the most sterile regions, and lo! they teem with interest and incident. Every thing is turned into a novel, and a novel into everything. Whether by thus extending their sphere of action novel writers have done much to forward the general interests of literature is very questionable. The enchanting prospects which they lay open to the imagination charm many into the path of knowledge who would otherwise have been strangers to it; but they are too apt, when there, to listen to the songs of birds and the gushing of the streams over pebbled beds, or to linger in bowers of eglantine and roses and indulge in dreams of fancy, while the night is fast approaching 'in which no man can work.' Their appetite for novels becomes so great that they have no relish for any other books; and in their eagerness for this kind of reading they neglect the more substantial and useful sources of information.

The new ground that novel writers have, of late, trodden is often a specious plea for dalliance in their enchantments by many who value themselves on having tastes more sound and wholesome than those of lovesick girls and neglected gentlewomen. Hundreds who would condemn the wit of Fielding, the humour of Smollett, the mystery of Mrs. Radcliffe, the horrors of Lewis, or the satire of Cervantes would, nevertheless, with great complacency spend their evenings over the pages of an historical novel containing a picture of the characters, the governments, the intrigues of the Louises, Elizabeths, Jameses, and Charleses, with all their foibles, crimes, persecutions, and enormities.

It is true, — they tell us — the pages of these historical repositories are embellished by certain narratives which savour much of the fantastical vanities, the loves, and the jealousies of more

frivolous productions; but then it was not these that attracted their attention. They read for information: if they stoop to pluck a primrose or a daisy, they but breathe its perfume for a moment and then throw it away; while they gather and lay up the more substantial fruits in the storehouse of memory. Under these circumstances many march onward in the pursuit of knowledge. They firmly believe, all the while, they are pursuing substantial and useful information, when the truth is they are only seeking what they find — entertainment.

But allowing that the reader does not seek chiefly for amusement but for information and that the main facts are historical, — is a novel such authority as one would quote in confirmation of any argument or assertion relative to particular characters or events recorded in history? If asked a question respecting any event in the history of England or Scotland, should we answer on the authority of Hume, Smollett, or Robertson, or upon that of Shakspeare or Sir Walter Scott? The great Marlborough is said to have hazarded an opinion upon an historical point on the authority of Shakspeare; but the circumstance is more complimentary to the genius of the poet than to the historic attainments of the hero of Blenheim. Few men who have any other resource will follow the great captain in this route, however high the name that has led the way. It is true that the works of Shakspeare and Sir Walter Scott contain many historical truths; but then they are so interwoven with fictions, so disjointed and misplaced, that it is almost impossible to unravel the one from the other, or to arrange them so as to make them very consistent and uniform. Those who wish to extract the truths and leave the fictions behind are puzzled to determine which is which; and if they wish to set their minds at rest upon the subject, are, after all, obliged to refer to history as an umpire. This, it is true, is precisely the point to which this

kind of reading, to be useful, should conduct us. But does it usually lead to this result? An honest Scotsman, it is said, having heard that a certain kind of seamews were excellent *whets*, resolved to make the experiment. But, to his great surprise, after he had eaten half a dozen of them he was not a bit more hungry than when he began! Now it is to be feared that hundreds who have devoured with avidity the historical novels of the author of *Waverley* have not improved their taste for history by so doing one whit more than the canny Scot increased his appetite for dinner by eating seamews; but have, on the contrary, considered this a sufficient apology for altogether neglecting more authentic sources of information.

. . . Whether novel-writers — I mean such as write with this intention — do usually take the best method of teaching morals, is questionable. There is generally, too little connection between the means and the end. It is something like dragging a seventy-four with a pack-thread. The sudden transitions from the depth of misery and the very abyss of wretchedness to the summit of felicity and honour depicted in these works, even where the characters of those who are supposed to be the subjects of this good fortune are represented to be virtuous, rather militate against than support the cause they thus ostensibly advocate. The reward of virtue, to be effectual, should be such as all who act up to her dictates may reasonably hope to obtain. For it becomes nugatory if placed out of their reach. And what person of common sense would expect from the exercise of the most conscientious virtue such rewards as the sentimentalists so lavishly bestow upon their heroes and heroines?

Every day's experience proves to us that in the political as well as in the natural world, the virtuous enjoy and suffer in common with others, without receiving any other rewards than such as are

peculiarly their own, the approbation of their Maker and their fellow creatures and the testimony of a good conscience, — rewards of no mean magnitude, but very different from those which such works exhibit, and which their perusal leads us to expect. To those, therefore, who have too much common sense to be deluded into the expectation of receiving such a recompense for supposed or real merit, they hold out no inducements to virtuous conduct; because these persons do not believe in the existence of such uncommon self denial, or if they do, that it is paid by such good fortune. But if such characters are in no danger of being deluded, they are too apt to be disgusted and to suppose that virtue itself is as chimerical as its reward. On the other hand those who are mad enough to pursue a phantom that lures but to deceive may be compared to a man who, standing on the top of a mountain, supposes he can transport himself to the summit of another without having to perform the painful and fatiguing task of scrambling through the deep glen that divides them; or, to the farmer who, because he is promised a 'seed-time and harvest', expects his garner will be filled with corn though he neither sows nor reaps.

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